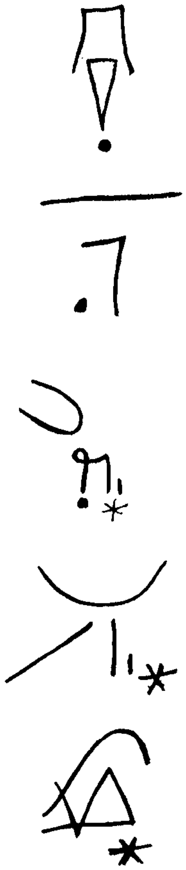
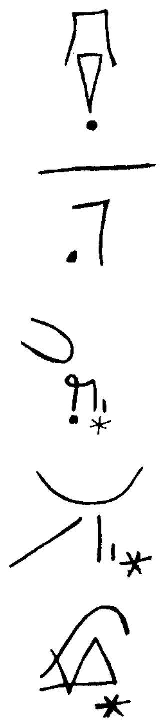


Dance Writing® Shorthand

FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE



By
Valerie Sutton



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DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

Table Of Contents



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

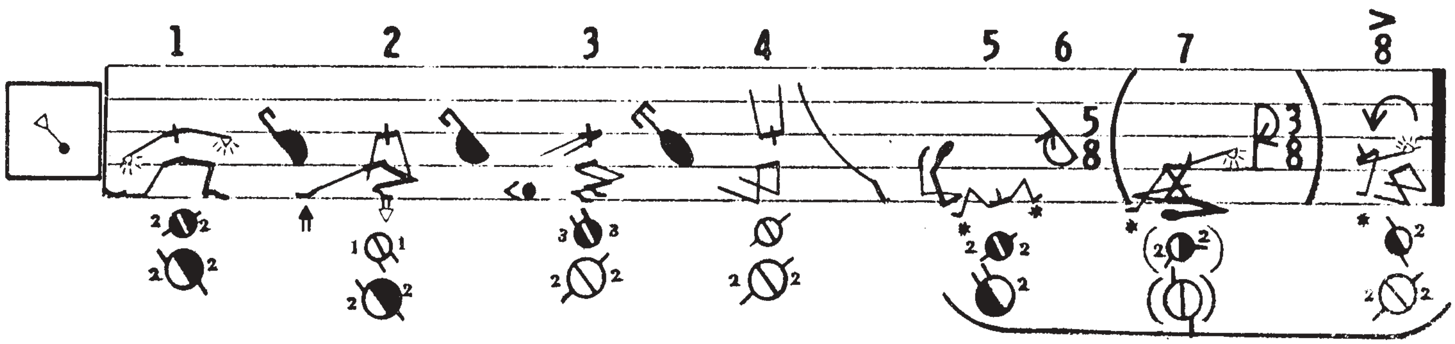
LESSON ONE

Introduction To DANCE WRITING® Shorthand

INTRODUCTION TO DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND

Sutton Movement Writing & Shorthand is a visual script that writes all movement. The system writes all forms of dance, mime, and sign language. The dance section of Sutton Movement Writing is called DANCE WRITING®. The basic textbooks that teach DANCE WRITING® are entitled: DANCE WRITING® FOR CLASSICAL BALLET and DANCE WRITING® FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE. They are available from The Center For Sutton Movement Writing, P.O. Box 517, La Jolla, California, 92038-0517, USA. Tel: (858)456-0098 Fax: (858)456-0020 Sutton@DanceWriting.org • http://www.DanceWriting.org • http://www.MovementWriting.org

DANCE WRITING" is a handwriting for dance designed for accurate, visual, recording of all dance forms. It is easy to read because it is based on stick figure drawings that look like the picture of the movement. The stick figure drawings are written from left to right on a five-lined staff. DANCE WRITING® is very accurate because of added symbols for the third-dimension that are written below the stick figure drawing. Details of turn-out and turn-in are written beside the 3-D Symbols (also called Position Symbols) with numbers, and movements of the torso, hands, facial expressions, and dynamics can be notated at will. The pattern of movement is written in a Pattern Stage to the left of each staff line, and the dance can be written in collaboration with the music. Below is an example of DANCE WRITING®



DANCE WRITING® is accurate and easy to read, but it takes time to write. DANCE WRITING® Shorthand is a shortened version of DANCE WRITING® and can be written very fast. The movements of a solo dancer can be written as fast as they happen with DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. Movement can be written at the speed it occurs. DANCE WRITING® Shorthand uses symbols that are based on the symbols in DANCE WRITING®, but the Shorthand symbols are shortened and less detailed. Below is an example of DANCE WRITING® Shorthand:



A thorough knowledge of DANCE WRITING® is a necessary requirement before learning DANCE WRITING® Shorthand since the two sections are intertwined and inter-related. It takes approximately 40 hours to learn the detailed DANCE WRITING® well, and it then takes approximately 20 hours to learn the symbols in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. Once learned, Shorthand skills must be practiced daily to keep speed. Shorthand skills must become as automatic as walking, sleeping, typing or driving before movement can be written at the speed it occurs.

Shorthand systems used b.y secretaries for English (such as Gregg Shorthand, or Pitman Shorthand) must be transcribed into written English very soon after the notes are taken, or the shorthand will be difficult to read later. The Shorthand notes are scribbled very fast, and do not record every detail of every word. The Shorthand is like a memory aid. The secretary can transcribe what was said by the help of her notes and her memory. If too much time elapses between taking the notes and-transcription, then the memory is gone, and the notes are not accurate enough by themselves.

Just like secretarial shorthand, DANCE WRITING® Shorthand is written at speed and then is immediately transcribed into the accurate DANCE WRITING®. The Shorthand is written on adding machine rolls of paper so that no time is lost trying to turn a page. Special shorthand tables are placed in the lap, and the DANCE WRITING® stenographer writes with one hand while pulling the paper with the other. The stenographer cannot look at the hands while writing, but must look out at the movement. In time The Center For Sutton Movement Writing hopes to have typing machines that will make DANCE WRITING® Shorthand even faster and more accurate.

To write a Sheet Dance (like sheet music) of a piece of choreography, the DANCE WRITING® stenographer will watch the dance one time, and write the movements at speed in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. The stenographer then takes the Shorthand notes home and transcribes the notes into the detailed DANCE WRITING®. The stenographer returns to view the dance once more to make certain all is accurate. The Sheet Dance is then completed and ready for publication.

When the dance includes large groups of people the dance must be viewed more than two times. Group dances can be written in DANCE WRITING’ Shorthand quickly with a team of stenographers. The stenography team then transcribes the notes together, creating one large Sheet Dance.

This book teaches the basics of DANCE WRITING® Shorthand for modern & jazz dance. It only teaches Shorthand for solo dancers, and does not teach the Shorthand for large groups.

Other books available on DANCE WRITING® Shorthand are: DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR CLASSICAL BALLET and DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR GROUP DANCES. Contact The Center For Sutton Movement Writing for information.

Books and literature on other sections of Sutton Movement Writing & Shorthand are also available from the Center. Besides DANCE WRITING®, other sections are SIGN WRITING®, MIME WRITING™, SPORTS WRITING™, and SCIENCE WRITING™. See page 4 for a diagram.

SUTTON MOVEMENT WRITING®

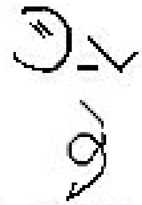
SUTTON SIGN WRITING®

Goldilocks





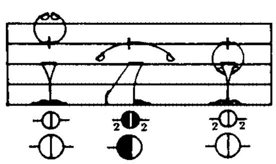
SignWriting Printing



SignWriting Shorthand

SUTTON DANCE WRITING®

Dance Writing®

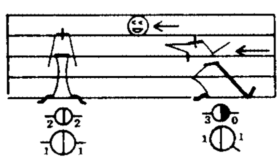


Dance Writing™ Shorthand

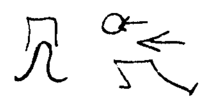


SUTTON MIME WRITING™

Mime Writing™

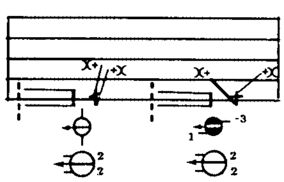


Mime Writing® Shorthand

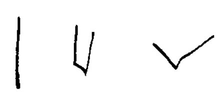


SUTTON SCIENCE WRITING™

Science Writing™

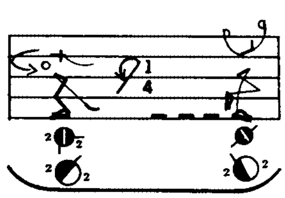


Science Writing™ Shorthand



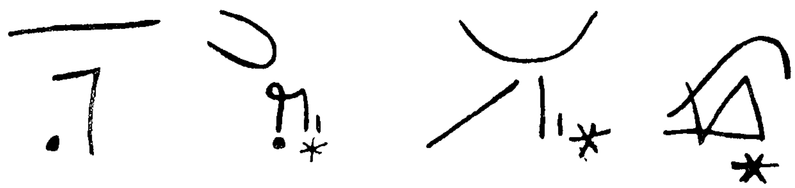
SUTTON SPORTS WRITING™

Sports Writing™



Sports Writing™ Shorthand





DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON TWO

Careers Enhanced By DANCE WRITING® Shorthand Skills

CAREERS ENHANCED BY DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND SKILLS

DANCE WRITING® Shorthand skills can make jobs easier for dancers and all those who work in the dance field. Developing good Shorthand skills can be a great advantage if you are working in the areas of:

1. Professional Performing
2. Choreography
3. Dance Research
4. Dance Instruction
5. Dance Therapy
6. Dance Management
7. Dance Journalism

Performing dancers can learn roles quickly by jotting the steps down with the Shorthand between rehearsals. Choreographers can jot down new choreographic ideas before they are forgotten. Dance researchers can use DANCE WRITING® Shorthand to record historic dances and one of the most obvious applications for the Shorthand is to aid teachers of dance. Teachers are always creating new choreography for their classes, and what better way to remember new barre routines or solos than to jot them down quickly before class. In the same way the Shorthand benefits dance therapists, directors of dance companies, and dance critics.

New careers are also developing in the field of dance notation. As DANCE WRITING® becomes more known, more jobs for DANCE WRITING® stenographers will open. A career in dance nota tion for a company is similar to a specialized secretary in English. The dance stenographer attends rehearsals and performances of the company which he/she works for and records the repertoire with DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. The stenographer then transcribes all the notes into the detailed DANCE WRITING® for others to read. When the company is ready, the manuscripts can be published as Sheet Dance and the company builds a library of notated works. The DANCE WRITING® stenographer becomes a “published” notator and has contributed to the preservation of dance for generations to come.



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON THREE

The Five Elements Used In DANCE WRITING® Shorthand

THE FIVE ELEMENTS USED IN DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND

There are five basic elements used when writing in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand.
The five elements are:

1. Prior knowledge of dance and DANCE WRITING®
2. The Shorthand Table.
3. The Memory.
4. Good Visual Perception.
5. Relaxation.

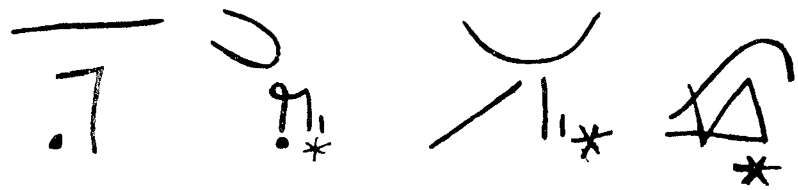
Prior knowledge of dance and DANCE WRITING® is necessary. Many details are left out of DANCE WRITING® Shorthand, and it would be impossible to transcribe the writing into DANCE WRITING® without a knowledge of dance and its written form. It is suggested that a new student of DANCE WRITING® Shorthand is at least at the intermediate dance level, and it is a pre-requisite that a new student has completed DANCE WRITING® Workshops/Courses One and Two.

Shorthand Tables are available from The Center For Sutton Movement Writing. The Shorthand Table places a roll of adding machine paper on a roller on one side of a small lap table. The paper is stripped across this lap table so that the writer can write across the paper. The roller keeps the roll of paper in place as the writer writes. The writer writes with one hand while feeding the paper onto the floor with the other hand. The paper starts to pile up on the floor beside the writer as the writing gets faster and faster. Although this is an inconvenience, the writer never has to stop to turn the page and disturb the flow of writing.

Future plans by The Center For Sutton Movement Writing schedule, when funding permits, the manufacturing of new and better devices for DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. In time there will be electronic or computerized typing machines for writing dance at dancing speeds. Such machines will add to speed and accuracy and will aid the writer with transcription into DANCE WRITING®. Contact the Center for information.

The memory is an essential part of taking shorthand. In all shorthand systems, the notes help the memory and the memory helps the notes. The two work together, and without one or the other the notetaking would be impossible. When the writer watches and writes the movements, two things happen simultaneously: I)
The hand records what the eyes see. 2)The brain (memory) records what the eyes see too. Later, when transcribing the notes, the memory helps the writer with the transcription. So far it is our experience that when the memory and notes are in conflict, the notes are usually right, and the memory failed.

Good visual perception is developed through DANCE WRITING® Shorthand training. You do not have to be born with it to be a good Shorthand notetaker. Good training as a notetaker requires relaxation. Visual perception seems to improve when a person is relaxed, and lets the hand and mind flow.



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON FOUR

How To Practice DANCE WRITING® Shorthand

HOW TO PRACTICE DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND

1. Place the Shorthand Table on your lap or on the table in front of you.

2. If you are right handed, place the roll of paper anchored on the Shorthand Table on your right side.

3. If you are left handed, place the roll of paper anchored on the Shorthand Table on your left side.

4. If you are right handed, you will write with your right hand and feed the paper onto the floor with your left hand.

5. If you are left handed, you will write with your left hand and feed the paper onto the floor with your right hand.

6. The hand that you write with must rest against the little piece of wood (short stick) that is near the roll of paper. The hand that you write with never moves from side to side in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. In DANCE WRITING® Shorthand it is the paper that moves, while the writing hand stays in one place. That is why it is important that the hand rests against the little piece of wood. It teaches the hand that it cannot move while writing.

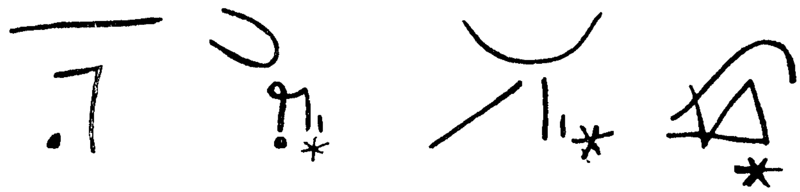
7. Use a well-sharpened pencil or an ink pen that will definitely not run out of ink while writing. Pencil usually is safer.

8. Learn to relax with DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. DANCE WRITING® Shorthand becomes automatic, like typing or driving, with training. If one tenses or tries too hard it is easy to freeze the hand rather than write at speed. If you just "let it happen without thinking" you will find it quite easy and enjoyable. There are some who have almost immediate skill for DANCE WRITING® Shorthand because they relax and let it flow. Others find it at first nerve racking. To develop a good technique in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand takes relaxation and patience with oneself.

9. Never look down when you write. Always watch the person who is moving. If you think you have made a mistake - never look down to see! You will only make more mistakes and will miss other movements. When a mistake is made just go right on writing as if nothing happened. All people make some mistakes when writing Shorthand. Be patient with yourself while learning the skill and allow the writing to occur.

10. Practice. Practice. And more practice. Practice everyday for at least a half hour, if not many hours. No matter how skilled you may be in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand, you will lose speed and accuracy if you do not write it everyday. This is true for all shorthand systems. If you have to stop and think even for a split second about a symbol in the system when you are writing, then you will lose accuracy. So, if you go on a vacation, and come back to the Shorthand a month later, you will need to practice to regain speed and efficiency.

11. Establish a routine for practicing. Begin with the Basic Symbols for the body. Continue on to other symbols (Movement Symbols) and then begin writing complete dance sequences. Video tapes may be available from The Center For Sutton Movement Writing for practicing DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. Contact the Center.



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON FIVE

Basic Symbols For Positions Of The Body

BASIC SYMBOLS FOR POSITIONS OF THE BODY

The following symbols are the Basic Symbols for the legs, arms and body in modern and jazz dance.

Write a long row of each symbol without looking at your hands. Practice many times until the hand writes the symbols faster and faster. Your instructor or others should clap faster and faster, and you should try to write at that speed, no matter how fast.

Notice there is a rhythm for writing each symbol. For example, if a symbol has three lines to it, the rhythm of writing will be 1, 2, 3. If you think 1, 2, 3, every time you write the symbol you will find yourself writing faster. In time your hand will write in this rhythm automatically, without thinking. The rhythm is written in parentheses after each symbol below.

The Legs

1. One straight leg, turned-out:  (hip, leg, foot or foot, leg, hip - 1,2,3)

2. One straight leg, parallel:  (hip, leg, dot or dot, leg hip - 1,2,3)

3. One straight leg, turned-in:  (hip, leg, foot or reverse) (1,2,3)

4. Other straight leg, turned-out:  (foot, leg, hip or hip, leg, foot - 1,2,3)

5. Other straight leg, parallel:  (dot, leg, hip or hip, leg, dot - 1,2,3)

6. Other straight leg, turned-in:  (foot, leg, hip or reverse) (1,2,3)

7. Both legs together, turned-out: (straight legs)  (hip, leg, leg: 1,2,3)

8. Both legs together, parallel: (straight legs)  (hip, leg, leg, dot or leg, hip, leg, dot: 1,2,3,4)

9. Both legs together, turned-in: (straight legs)



(foot, curve, foot) (1,2,3)

10. One bent leg, turned-out:



(elongated hip, calf, foot or foot, calf, elongated hip: 1,2,3)

11. One bent leg, parallel:



(hip, curlicue, dot, or reverse: 1,2,3)

*Note: The curlicue represents the knee projecting n the Sagittal Plane, toward the front wall of the room. The detailed DANCE WRITING® uses a hollow circle to represent this position and the Shorthand uses a curlicue.

12. One bent leg, turned-in:



(hip,, "v", foot: 1, &2, 3)

13. Other bent leg, turned-out:



(foot, calf, elongated hip or elongated hip, calf, foot: 1,2,3)

14. Other bent leg, parallel:



(dot, curlicue, hip, or reverse: 1,2,3)

15. Other bent leg, turned-in:



(foot, "v", hip: 1, &2, 3)

16. Both legs together, bent, turned-out:



(elongated hip, leg, leg) (1,2,3)

17. Both legs together, bent, parallel:



(dot, curlicue, hip or reverse: 1,2,3)

*Note: It is important in this symbol to write the hip line very long. The hip line should extend on both sides of the line for the thighs. The thigh line should be in the middle of the hip line. If the hip line does not extend on both sides, it may be confused with a single standing leg, bent and parallel.

18. Both legs together, bent, turned-in:



(foot, long leg, long hip, long leg, foot: 1,2,3,4,5)

*Note: Be sure to leave space between the feet. Here is an explanation:
1. Write the first foot. 2. Draw one line up to the diagonal, blending the calf of one leg with the thigh of the other leg. 3. Write the hip. 4. Write the thigh of one leg, blending it with the calf of the other leg. 5. Write the foot.

Step One



Step Two



Step Three



Step Four



Step Five

19. Both legs spread apart, straight, turned-out:



(foot, leg, hip, leg, foot: &1)

*Note: Most straight legs in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand are drawn with curves, blending the hips and legs together in one quick stroke. Most bent legs in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand are drawn with a squared-off elongated hip (there are some exceptions). The elongated hip represents the hip and thigh lines blending together.

20. Both legs spread apart, straight, parallel, Version One:



(dot, curve, dot: 1,2,3)

21. Both legs spread apart, straight, parallel, Version Two:



(curve, with no dots: &1)

*Note: Although the dot does represent the toes projecting to the audience and is very accurate, many stenographers prefer Version Two over Version One, above. It is assumed in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand that when no foot is written, the legs are parallel. The one exception to this rule is Symbol #7, both legs together, straight, turned-out. N. feet are written on this symbol, yet the legs are turned-out. Therefore, when the legs are together and parallel, the dot must be written. When the legs are spread apart and parallel, the stenographer may choose to write the dot or not to write the dot (Version One or Version Two).

22. Both legs spread apart, straight, turned-in:



(foot, curve, foot) (1,2,3)

23. Both legs spread apart, bent, turned-out:



(foot, calf, elongated hip, calf, foot: 1,2,3,4,5)

24. Both legs spread apart, bent, parallel, Version One:



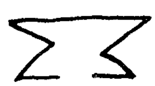
(dot, curlicue, curlicue, dot: 1, &2, &3, &4)

25. Both legs spread apart, bent, parallel, Version Two:



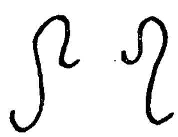
(curlicue, curlicue: &1, &2)

26. Both legs spread apart, bent, turned-in:



(foot, "v", hip, "v" foot" 1, &2, 3, &4, 5)

27. One straight leg front, one straight leg back, turned-out:



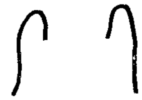
(foot, short leg, hip, long leg, foot, or foot, long leg, hip, short leg, foot) (Rhythm: &1) (in one stroke)

28. One straight leg front, one straight leg back, parallel, Version One:



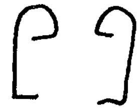
(dot, short leg, long leg, dot, or reverse) (1,2,3)

29. One straight leg front, one straight leg back, parallel, Version Two:



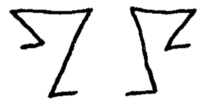
(short leg, long leg, or reverse: &1)

30. One straight leg front, one straight leg back, turned-in:



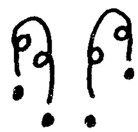
(foot, short leg, hip, long leg, foot or rever (&1)

31. One bent leg front, one bent leg back, turned-out:



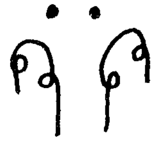
(foot, calf, elongated hip, calf, foot: 1,2,3,

32. One bent leg front, one bent leg back, parallel, Version One:



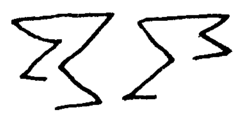
(dot, curlicue, curlicue, dot: 1, &2, &3, &4)

33. One bent leg front, one bent leg back, parallel, Version Two:



(curlicue, curlicue: &1,

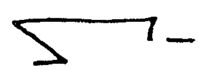
34. One bent leg front, one bent leg back, turned-in:



(foot, "v", hip, "v", foo (1, &2, 3, &4, 5)

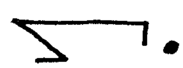
*Note: One leg front, one leg back is similar to positions with the legs spread to the side. The difference between the symbols is that the legs spread to the side write the feet at the same level (no third dimension). Positions with one leg front & one leg back write the feet in a third dimensional fashion. The leg closest to the stenographer is written longer and the leg farthest from the stenographer is written extremely short. It is important to write the shorter leg extremely short, because when writing at speed without looking at your hands, there is the danger that legs spread to the side and legs spread front and back can look the same. Practice writing legs front and back with one long, long leg and one short, short leg so that confusion can never occur.

35. One bent leg front, one straight leg back, turned-out:



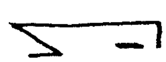
(foot, calf, elongated hip, short back leg, space, foot: 1,2,3,4,5)

36. One bent leg front, one straight leg back, parallel:



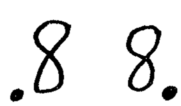
(foot, calf, elongated hip, short back leg, space, dot: 1,2,3,4,5)

37. One bent leg front, one straight leg back, turned-in:



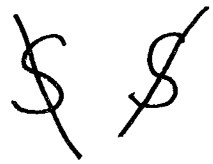
(foot, calf, elongated hip, short back leg, space, foot: 1,2,3,4,5)

38. Both legs crossed and touching, straight, turned-out (5th position) Version One:

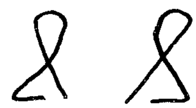


(number 8, with dot on side of leg that is front: 1,2)

*Note: Version One of fifth position places the dot, representing which leg is in front of the other leg, on the side of the leg that is in front. The notator must write the dot first and then the figure 8 if the person's right leg is in front. The figure 8 is written first with the dot written after the figure 8 when the left leg is in front (when the person is facing the audience, facing the notator). This is true for right-handed notators. Left-handed notators reverse the order of writing.

39. Both legs crossed and touching, straight, turned-out (5th position) Version Two:  (Capital S, slash) (1,2)

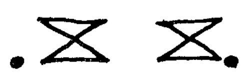
*Note: Version Two of fifth position writes the capital S and then slashes a line over the S. The slash represents the leg that is in front of the other leg.

40. Both legs crossed and touching, straight, turned-out (5th position) Version Three:  (Straight line, curves: 1,2)

*Note: In Version Three the straight line is written first, representing the leg that is in front, and then the curves follow quickly, in one stroke.

41. Both legs crossed and touching, straight, parallel:  (curves, dot) (1,2)

42. Both legs crossed and touching, straight, turned-in:  (curves, line) (1,2)

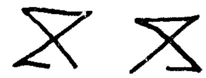
43. Both legs crossed and touching, bent, turned-out (5th position) Version One:  (Square 8, with dot) (1,2,3,4)

*Note: If you decide to use Version One for straight legs in fifth position, then it is advised to use Version One for bent legs in fifth position. The squared figure 8 represents the elongated hip, leg, feet, leg (this order is good).

44. Both legs crossed and touching, bent, turned-out (5th position) Version Two:  (Z, with a slash) (&1, 2)

*Note: Just like Version Two for fifth position with straight legs, the hand is lifted to draw a slash for the leg that is in front.

45. Both legs crossed and touching, bent, turned-out (5th position) Version Three:



(Straight line, Z) (1, &2)

*Note: Just like Version Three for fifth position with straight legs, the straight line is written first, and the Z is then written without lifting the pencil from the paper.

46. Both legs crossed and touching, bent, parallel:



(curlicue, curlicue, dot: 1,2,3)

47. Both legs crossed and touching, bent, turned-in:



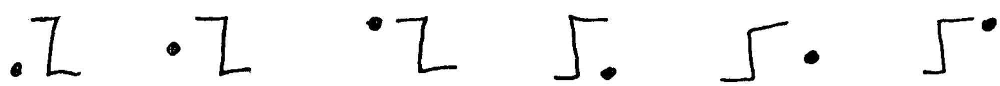
(leg, hip, leg, slash (for feet) (1,2,3,4)

48. Leg extended to audience:



(dot, hip, leg, foot, or reverse) (1,2,3,4)

49. Leg extended to the audience at different levels:



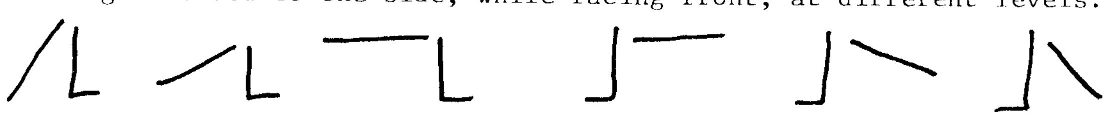
50. Leg extended to the side while facing the audience:



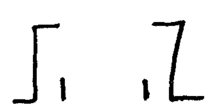
(line, space, leg, foot or reverse) (1,2,3)

*Note: All legs to the side of the body, no matter where the figure faces, will always have a space between the leg to the side and the hip of the body. Many times the hip is eliminated completely, but there absolutely must be a space at all times when the leg is to the side. Legs without a space, connected to the body, represent legs to the front or back of the body.

51. Leg extended to the side, while facing front, at different levels:



52. Leg extended to the back wall:

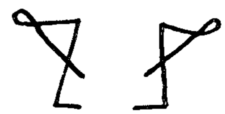


(line, hip, leg, foot or reverse) (1,2,3,4)

53. Leg extended to the back wall, at different levels:

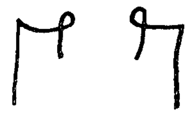


54. Bent leg lifted to the front, turned-out:



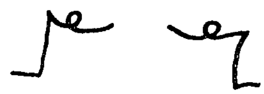
(foot, leg, hip, curlicue, leg or reverse: 1,2,3,4)

55. Bent leg lifted to the front, parallel:



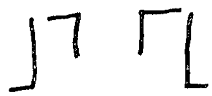
(calf, curlicue, hip, standing leg, or reverse) (1,2,3)

56. Bent leg lifted to the front, turned-in:



(foot, leg, hip, curlicue, leg: 1,2,3,4,5)

57. Bent leg lifted to the side, turned-out:



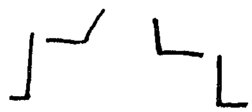
(foot, leg, thigh, calf) (1,2,3,4)

58. Bent leg lifted to the side, parallel:



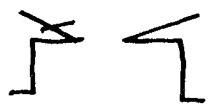
(foot, leg, hip, curlicue, leg: 1,2,3,4,5)

59. Bent leg lifted to the side, turned-in:



(foot, leg, thigh, calf) (1,2,3,4)

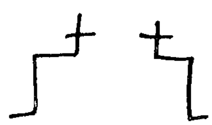
60. Bent leg lifted to the back, turned-out:



(foot, leg, hip, leg) (1,2,3,4)

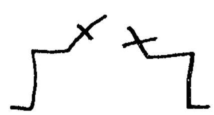
*Note: The horizontal crease in the knee usually used for the leg projecting to the back wall is optional in the turned-out position.

61. Bent leg lifted to the back, parallel:



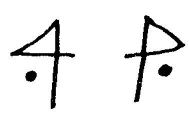
(foot, leg, hip, leg, slash) (1,2,3,4,5)

62. Bent leg lifted to the back, turned-in:



(foot, leg, hip, leg, slash) (1,2,3,4,5)

63. Bent leg touching standing leg, turned-out, toe to front: (Passe is classical ballet)



(Number 4 with a dot showing which leg is front of the other) (1,2,3,4)

*Note: Because the toe is touching to the front of the standing leg, there is no space between leg and hip. The legs and hip connect. The dot is placed on the side of the lifted bent leg. It is important to write the dot, or the position can be confused with a lifted bent leg touching to the back of the standing leg.

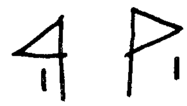
64. Bent leg touching standing leg, turned-out, toe to side:



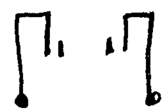
(V on its side, line) (1,2,3)

*Note: This position does have a space between the hip and the leg because

the toe is touching to the side of the standing leg. The hip isn't even written.

65. Bent leg touching standing leg, turned-out, toe to the back:  (Number 4, with line) (1,2,3,4)

*Note: The little line placed next to the bent leg indicates that the foot of the bent leg is <u>behind</u> the standing leg. The bent leg does not have a space.

66. One bent leg parallel, thigh down, calf projecting to back wall:  (standing leg, hip, thigh, line) (1,2,3,4)

The Ankles

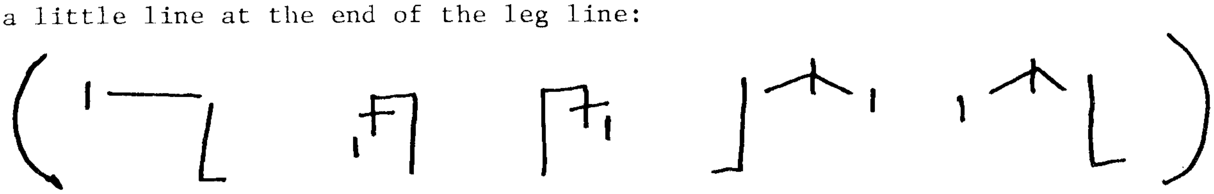
Flexing of the ankles is written by showing the picture of the foot as the ankle flexes. When the foot can be seen easily, it is written with a little line:



Flexing of the ankle that projects the toes to the audience is written with a quick dot at the end of the leg line:



Flexing of the ankle that projects the toes to the back wall is written with a little line at the end of the leg line:



The Arms

Always write the legs of the body first. If something happens too fast and a part of the body is not written it is better that the legs are written no matter what, since they are the foundation for the body. The arms can be filled-in later. Without the legs it is almost impossible to write the first rough draft of the transcription.

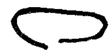
Write the legs first, and then, without pulling your paper, write the arms by moving the hand directly up. The arm symbols are placed up above the leg symbols. Then pull the paper after you have written the arm symbol, and move

your hand down to write the legs again. The sequence then is: legs, arms, pull paper, move hand.

1. Two arms rounded to the side:  (Long curve: 1)

2. Two arms rounded, held down:  (Horseshoe curve: 1)

3. Two arms rounded, held up:  (Horseshoe curve: 1)

4. Two arms rounded, curved in front of the chest:  (oval: &1)

5. Two arms held straight to the side: (Straight line: 1)

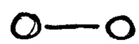
6. Two arms straight, held down:  (arm, shoulder, arm) (1,2,3)

*Note: Straight arms are written with square looking symbols. Rounded arms are written with curves.

7. Two arms straight, held up:  (arm, shoulder, arm) (1,2,3)

8. Two arms straight front, projecting to the audience:  (dot, shoulder, dot) (1,2,3)

9. Two arms straight back, projecting to the back wall:  (line, shoulder, line) (1,2,3)

10. Two arms relaxed front, projecting to the front wall:  (circle, shoulder, circle) (1,2,3)

11. Two arms relaxed back, projecting to the back wall: (line, shoulder, line) (1,2,3)

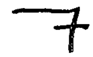
12. Two arms relaxed to the side of the body:  (curve, shoulder, curve) (1,2,3)

*Note: The rule that states that all legs to the side of the body must write a space between the leg and the hip only applies to the legs. Notation for the arms always connects the arms to the shoulders, even when the arms are to the side.

13. Two bent arms to the side of the body:  (arm, shoulder, arm) (1,2,3)

14. Two bent arms to the side, overhead:  (arm, shoulder, arm) (1,2,3)

15. Elbow towards the audience:  (shoulder, curlicue, arm) (1,2,3)

16. Elbow towards the back wall:  (shoulder, arm, line) (1,2,3)

17. Curved arms, one arm overhead, one arm to the side:  (make curve in one stroke) (&1)

18. Curved arms, one arm in front of chest, one arm to the side:  (make curve in one stroke) (&1)

19. Curved arms, one arm overhead, one arm in front of chest:  (make curve in one stroke) (&1)

20. Curved arms, one arm overhead, one arm curved down:  (make curve in one stroke) (&1)

21. Some variations on arm positions:

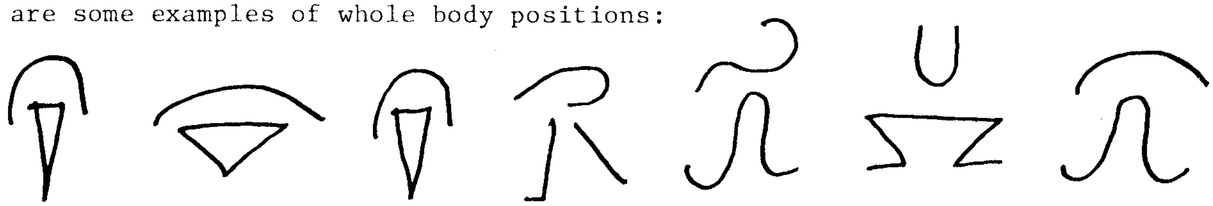


22. Arms with flexed wrists:

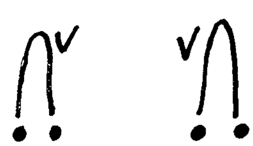


The Whole Body

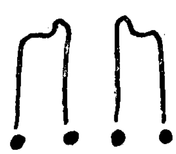
Practice writing arms and legs together. Write rows of one complete position of the arms and legs. Write the position of the legs first, then move your hand up to write the arms. Try to gain in speed without looking at your hands. Here are some examples of whole body positions:

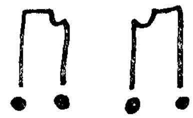


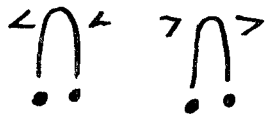
The Hips

1. One hip pressed forward:  (leg, hip, leg, arrow) (1,2,3,4)

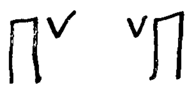
2. One hip pressed to the back:  (leg, hip, leg, arrow) (1,2,3,4)

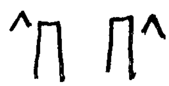
3. One hip pressed up:  (leg, straight hip, curve up, leg: 1,2,3,4)

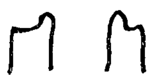
4. One hip pressed down:  (leg, straight hip, curve down, leg: 1,2,3,4)

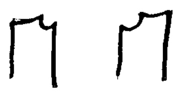
5. Hips isolated to the side:  (arrow, leg, hip, leg, arrow) (1,2,3,4,5)

The Shoulders

1. One shoulder pressed forward:  (arm, shoulder, arm, arrow) (1,2,3,4)

2. One shoulder pressed to the back:  (arm, shoulder, arm, arrow) (1,2,3,4)

3. One shoulder pressed up:  (arm, straight shoulder, curve up, arm: 1,2,3,4,)

4. One shoulder pressed down:  (arm, straight shoulder, curve down, arm: 1,2,3,4)

The Torso

Bending or twisting of the torso can be written in two different ways in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand.

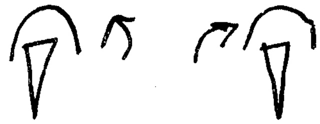
The first way is to write the whole body standing erect, with a bending or twisting arrow written near the figure. The actual picture of the bend or twist is not written with the figure. When the stenographer transcribes the Shorthand notes, he/she will write the real positions of the bend or twist in the detailed DANCE WRITING®. In the Shorthand the only indication of the bend or twist is in the little arrow near the drawing:

1. Bending forward: 

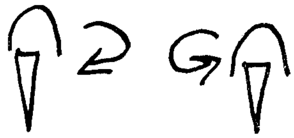
*Note: Draw the figure completely, as if it is standing straight. Place the arrow over the figure. Sequence: legs, arms, arrow.

2. Bending backward: 

3. Bending to the side:

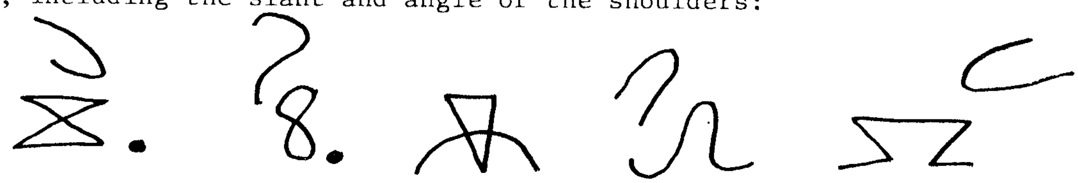


4. Twisting:



*Note: Do not show the above figures twisting or bending. Draw them standing facing the audience and then simply place the arrows beside them.

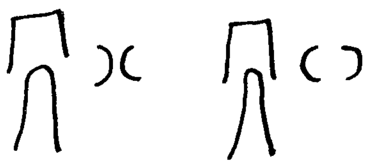
The second way to indicate bending or twisting of the torso is to write the position as it really looks. Place the upper body at the proper slant and level to show the twist or bend. Placing the twisting or bending arrow beside the figure is rarely done in these cases. The stenographer writes exactly what is seen, including the slant and angle of the shoulders:



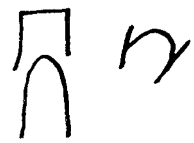
5. Isolations of the torso:



6. Contractions & bloating of the stomach:



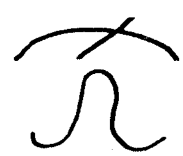
7. Rounded Spine:



The Face-Direction Line

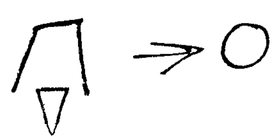
The Face Direction Line is the little line slashed across the shoulders that shows the turning of the head and face in different directions (formerly called the Neck Line). The Face Direction Line is rarely written in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. It is usually written-in after the Shorthand is completed.

When movements of the head and neck are important to the choreography, it may be necessary to write the Face Direction Line. If so, write th position first, and then write a quick slash across the shoulders:



Isolation Of The Head

Isolation of the head are written with a Facial Circle and an arrow in detailed DANCE WRITING®. The arrow pushes the head in the direction desired. It is written the same way in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand:



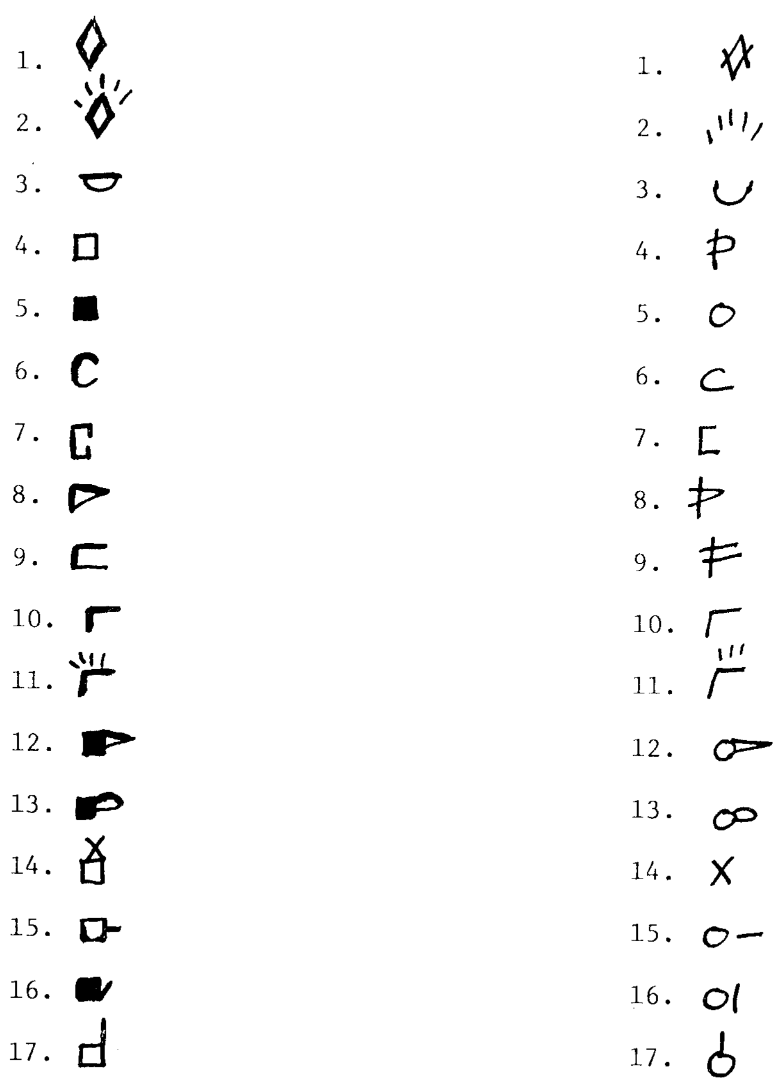
Facial Expressions

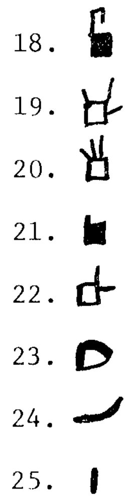
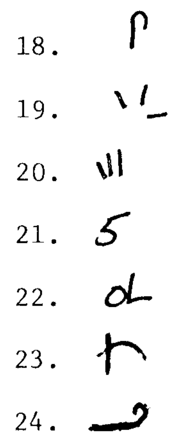
Facial expressions are only written when the facial expression is vital to the choreography. Write a fast circle and then write the way the face looks either in the circle, or to the side of the circle:



The Hands

Detailed hand positions can be written in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. In the following list of hand positions, the position is written in detailed DANCE WRITING® to the left, and the DANCE WRITING® Shorthand symbol is written to the right.

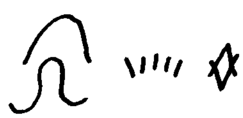


DANCE WRITING®	DANCE WRITING® Shorthand
18.–25. 	18.–24. 
	25. nothing

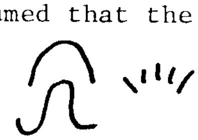
The hands are not usually notated. They are only written when necessary. The symbol for the hand is written to the side of the figure, after the figure is completed:



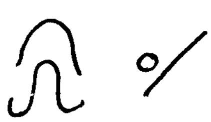
If both hands must be written, and the two hand shapes are different, then write the right hand first and the left hand second, side by side:



If both hands must be written, and the hand shapes are exactly the same, then write one hand only. It is assumed that the other handshape is the same:



If both hands must be written, and one hand shape is relaxed and neutral, and the other hand shape is in a fist, or a claw etc., then write the fist or claw symbol and then write a small slash at a diagonal, near the other hand shape. The small diagonal slash represents the neutral or relaxed hand:

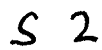


Oftentimes the hand shapes are written-in after the Shorthand is completed because of lack of time.

The Feet

When the feet are flat, they are not written in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. They are incorporated automatically in the symbols representing the legs.

Half toe feet and pointed feet must be written-in with separate symbols. Without those special symbols it is assumed that the feet are flat.



Half-Toe Foot



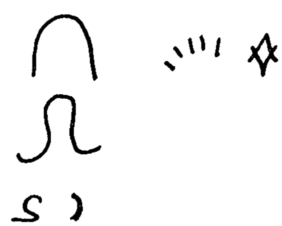
Pointed Foot

The symbols for the half toe foot or the pointed foot are written below the figure or to the side of the legs. It is up to the stenographer. If the feet symbols are written below the figure, they must be written first, then the legs, then the arms. The hand moves up the piece of paper. The symbols for the hands are always written to the side of the arms:

Arm Symbols Written Third

Leg Symbols Written Second

Foot Symbols Written First

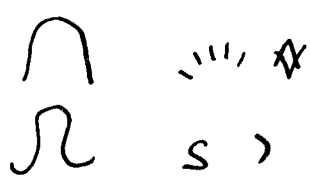


Hand Symbols Written Fourth

If the stenographer chooses to write the foot symbols to the side of the legs, the sequence of writing would be:

Arm Symbols Written Second

Leg Symbols Written First



Hand Symbols Written Third

Foot Symbols Written Fourth

It is important to decide which sequence you prefer and then always use that sequence in the future. The brain and hand become trained to one sequence and it will only slow your writing if you change your mind later.

The latter sequence above is in a perfect square. It has the advantage of moving your hand down at the end so the hand is ready to begin the legs of the next figure without shifting. It has the disadvantage of writing the foot symbols last, and if there is not enough time to complete the figure the foot positions will be lost.

The former sequence above places emphasis on the position of the feet and legs, and then if you have time, you can write the arms and hands. This is an advantage for many dances, but, your hand is finished high on the paper, and must shift to move down for the feet and legs of the next figure.

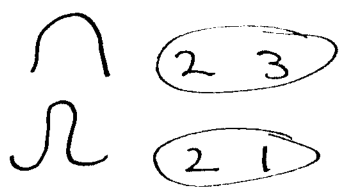
When two foot positions are different, the two symbols are written side by side. The first symbol is the position of the right foot. The second symbol is the position of the left foot:



Rotation Of The Limbs

Rotation numbers are used to write rotation of the limbs. They are rarely written in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand because of lack of time. The stenographer puts in rotation numbers at random, whenever the position seems difficult to see without the numbers. Oftentimes the stenographer will go back after the Shorthand is completed, and write in the rotation numbers quickly for later reference.

When writing the rotation numbers in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand, the numbers are placed to the side of the figure. Numbers for the arms are placed high, to the side of the arms. Numbers for the legs are placed low, to the side of the legs. The numbers are circled very quickly:



Rotation Numbers For The Arms

Rotation Numbers For The Legs

The rotation numbers must be circled, because the number 2 can otherwise be confused with the symbol for the half-toe foot. Foot symbols are not circled.



Half Toe Foot

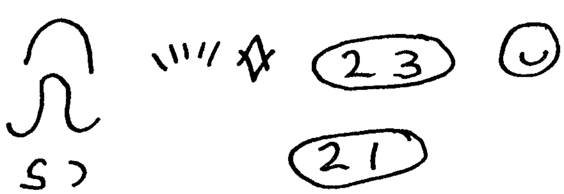


Rotation Number

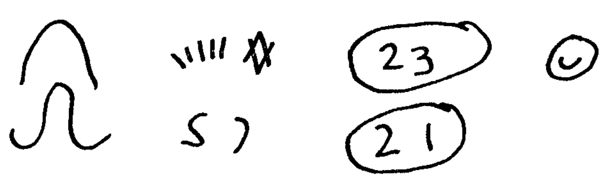
Writing Sequence

The legs and arms are the most important. Other details such as feet, hands, head, facial expressions, and rotation numbers are only written occasionally. It is therefore very rare that all the parts of the body would be written for one position. If all the parts of the body were written each time, the placement of the symbols on the paper would look like this:

Version One:



Version Two:





DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON SIX

Turning Positions Of The Body To Face All Directions

TURNING POSITIONS OF THE BODY TO FACE ALL DIRECTIONS

The basic symbols for positions of the body were introduced in Lesson Five. The symbols were shown facing the audience squarely en face. Now, in Lesson Six, we will turn these basic symbols to face other directions in the room.

Rule 1: When the figure faces the audience squarely en face, the symbol for the part of the body is written without any other symbol or angle.

Rule 2: When the figure faces the front corner of the room, the symbol for the part of the body is written on a slant and only if there is time, a 3-D Symbol (Position Symbol) showing the direction of facing is written below the figure.

Rule 3: When the figure faces the side wall of the room, the symbol for the part of the body is written on the same slant as when the figure faces the front corner (not necessary to write it at more of a slant than facing the corner) and most important, a large vertical line is slashed across the page. The vertical line represents the dotted line that is used in DANCE WRITING® for the side wall the figure faces. dotted lines take too long to write, so a large slash is used instead.

Rule 4: When the figure faces the back corner of the room, the symbol for the part of the body is written on a slant, similar as when facing the front corner, and parentheses are written around the figure. If there is time, also place a 3-D Symbol (Position Symbol) under the figure.

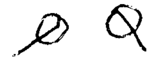
Rule 5: When the figure faces the back wall squarely, write the symbol for the part of the body straight, as if facing the front wall. Then write parentheses around the figure.



Facing Front — Facing Front Corner — Facing Front Corner — Facing Side Wall



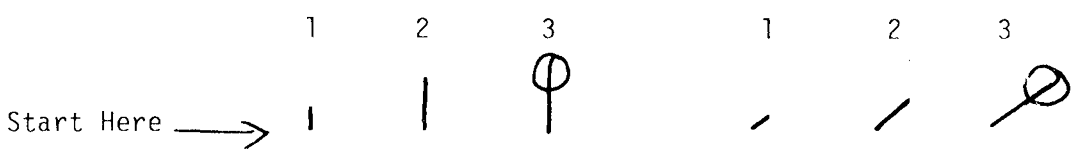
Facing Side Wall — Facing Back Corner — Facing Back Corner — Facing Back Wall

1. The Position Symbols En Face:  (Line, circle :1,2)
2. The Position Symbols, Front Corners:  (Line, circle: 1,2)
3. The Position Symbols, Side Wall:  (Line, circle: 1,2)
4. The Position Symbols, Back Corners:  (Line, circle: 1,2)
5. The Position Symbols, Back Wall:  (Line, circle: 1,2)

*Note: All 3-D Symbols (Position Symbols) are simply a line and a circle in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand, and they only show direction of facing. They are never darkened-in and they do not show degrees of depth as they do in the detailed DANCE WRITING®.

The 3-D Symbols (Position Symbols) are rarely written in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand while the actual notating is happening, since the dance is written so fast there is seldom time to place them below the figure. The 3-D Symbols (Position Symbols) are usually written-in when the notating is completed. The stenographer writes the movements in Shorthand, and then immediately goes back and writes the 3-D Symbols under the figures while the memory is fresh. The 3-D Symbols can help clarify figures during transcription.

Always write the line of the 3-D Symbol (Position Symbol) first and the circle second. Place your pencil in the direction on the paper you want the figure to face, and then draw the line away from the point you began and then draw the circle:



It is better to write the line first and the circle second because at speed problems can arise if the circle is written first. Oftentimes the circle can get written first and the line is forgotten or too short to read properly. Without the direction line, the symbol has no meaning.

Other rules to remember when turning figures:

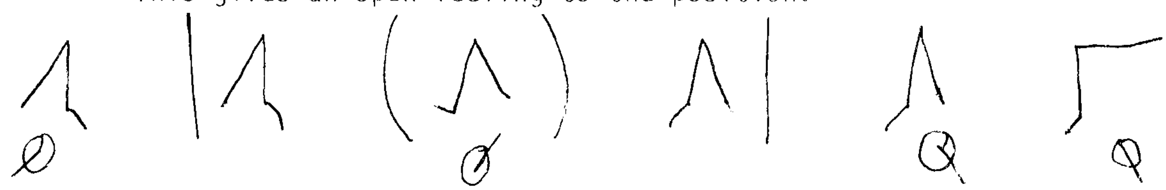
Rule 6: When writing the figure facing the front corners, write the hips at the top corner of the page, with the feet projecting to the front corner the figure is facing.



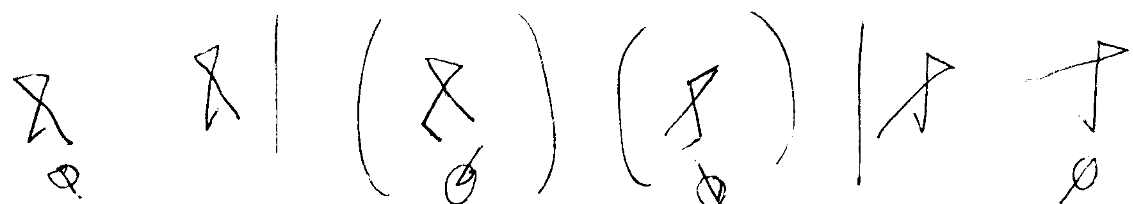
Rule 7: When writing the figure facing the back corners, write the hips at the top corner of the page, with the feet projecting away from the corner the figure is facing.



Rule 8: Whenever the legs are in an éffacé position (when the body faces the corner or side wall with the leg furthest from the audience in front of the other) do not write a hip line. Instead, simply write the foot and standing leg, and the other leg connected at the top with a point. This gives an open feeling to the position:

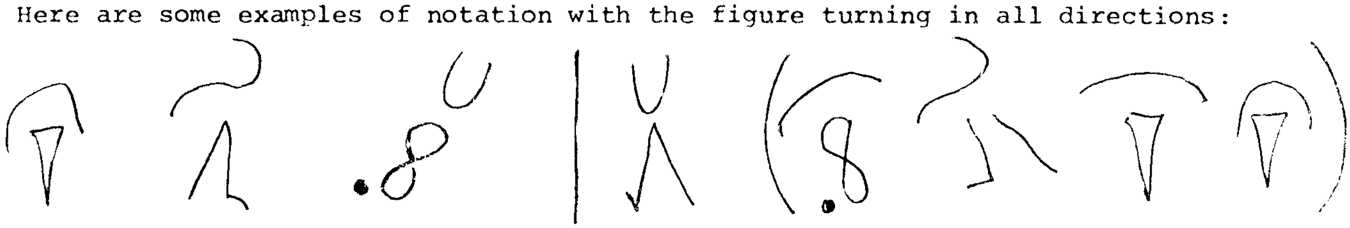


Rule 9: Whenever the legs are in a croisé position (when the body faces the corner or side wall with the leg closest to the audience in front of the other) the hip line is always drawn-in. The writing of the lower body takes the rhythm of 1, 2, 3, 4,: foot, leg, hip, leg:



These croisé and éffacé positions can occur when facing the front corner, side wall, or back corner. It takes a trained eye to see quickly whether the position is an éffacé or croisé position. This comes in time with practice. It is very important that these rules are followed, since it is the only way we can see which leg is in front or back. The legs to the side of the body always have a space for the hip, no matter where the figure faces.

Here are some examples of notation with the figure turning in all directions:



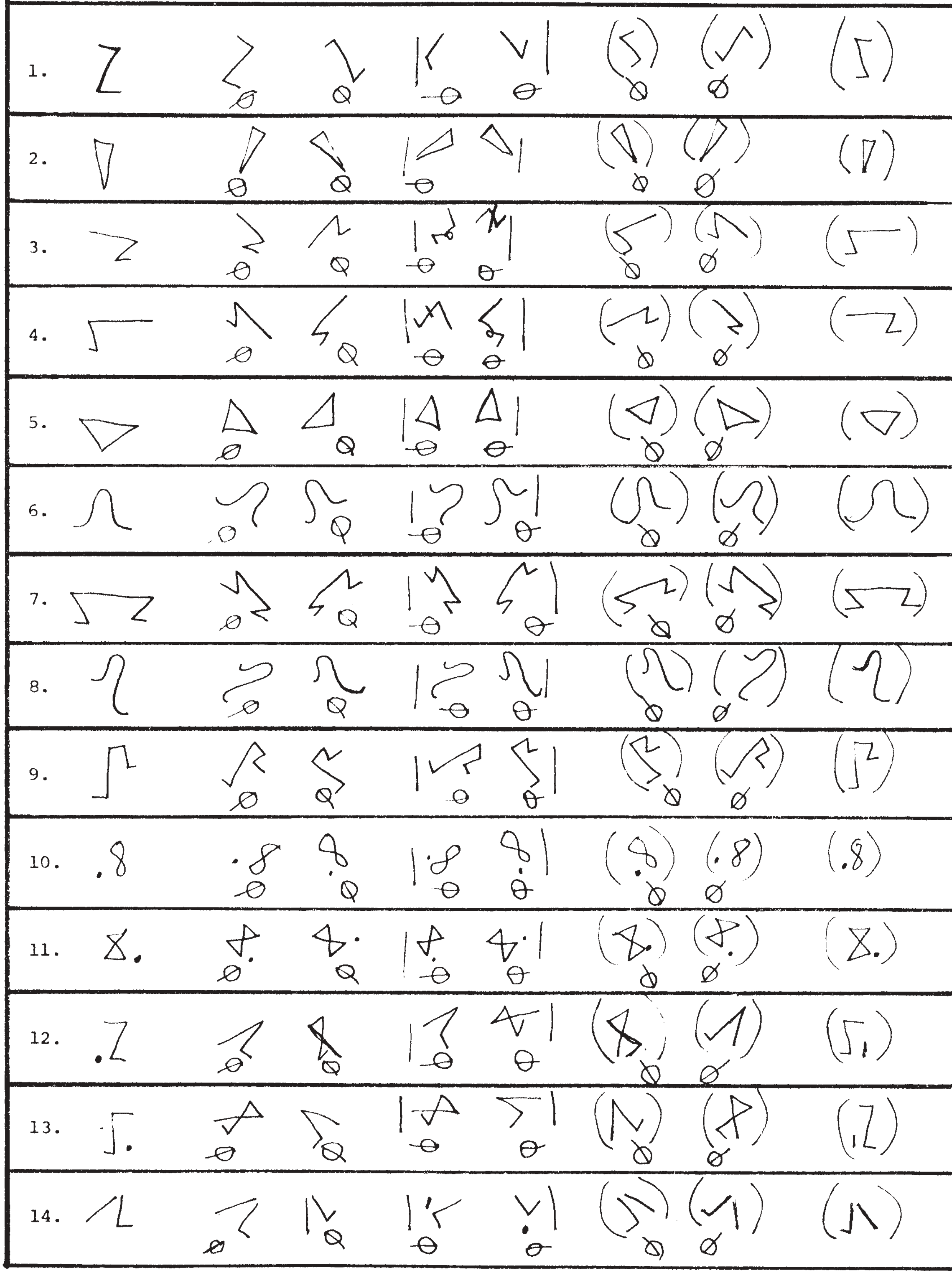
Rule 10: When more than one figure faces the back wall and back corners, only put parentheses around the first and last figures.

Rule 11: Fifth position facing the back corner or back wall places the dot on the side of the leg in the back of the other leg. This rule coordinates with the rule for darkening-in the back leg when the figure faces the back corner and back all in the detailed DANCE WRITING®.

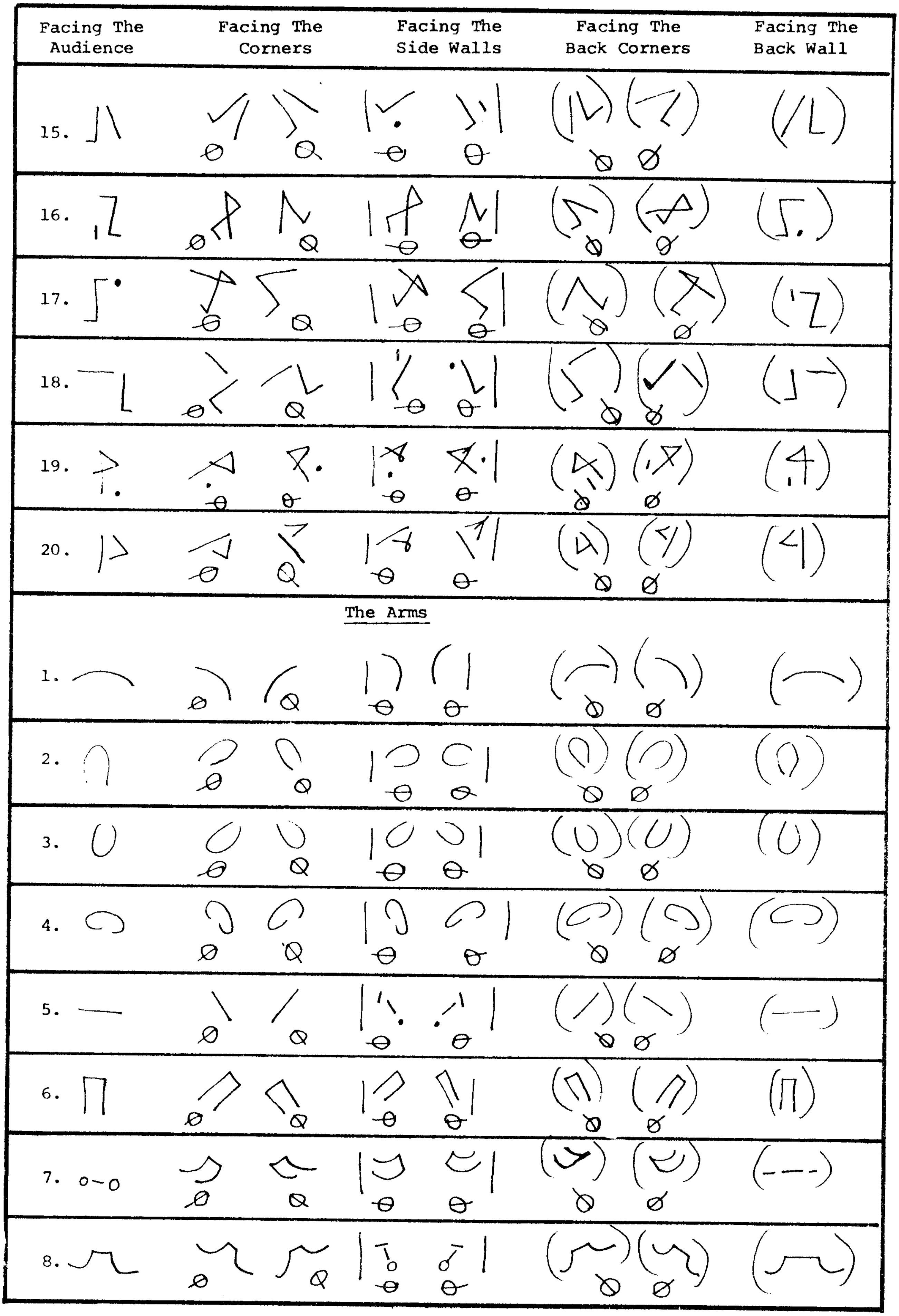
The basic symbols for positions of the body are listed on the following pages turning in all possible directions. This listing may be of use as ;I reference when practicing DANCE WRITING® Shorthand.

Turning The Figure

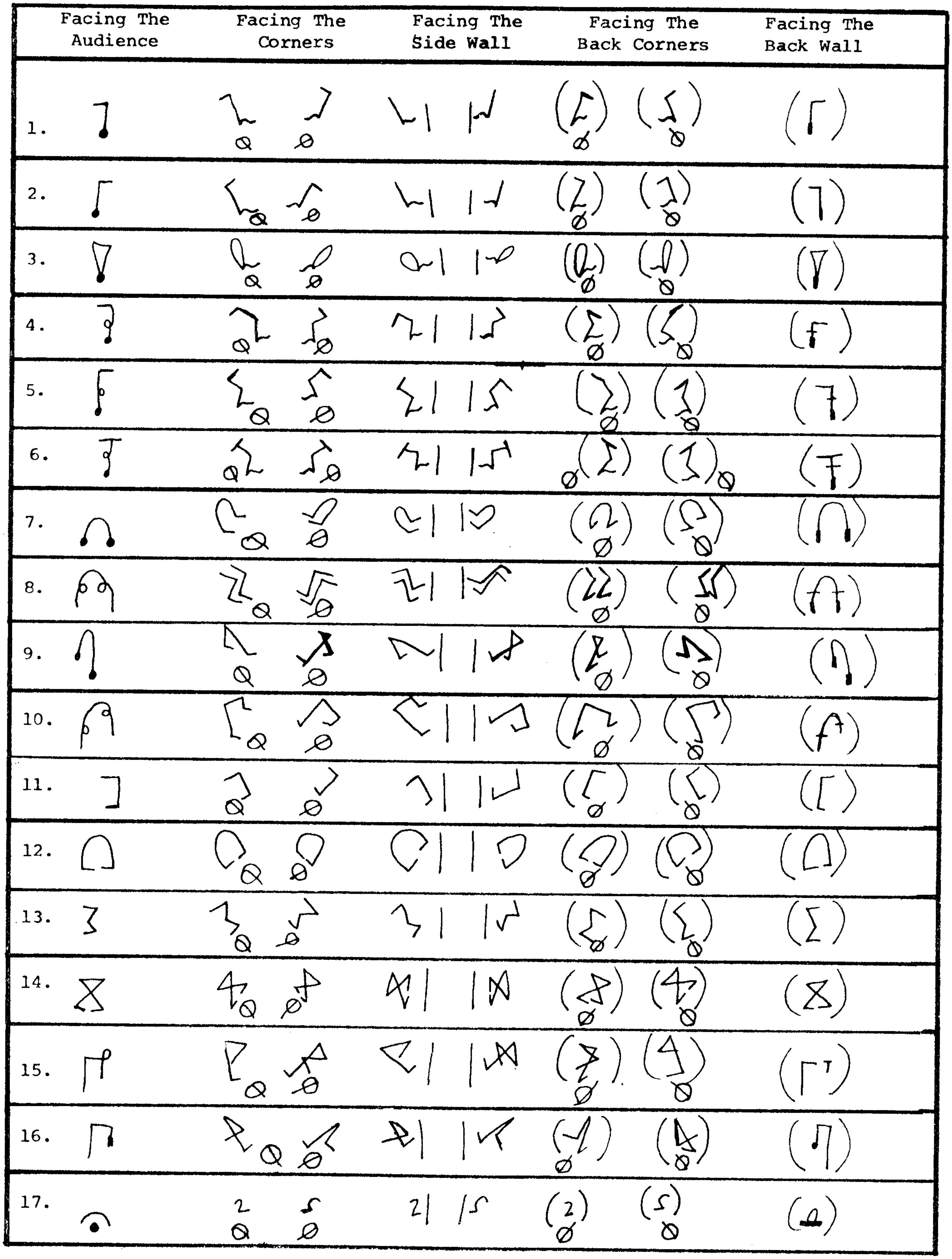
Facing The Audience	Facing The Corners	Facing The Side Walls	Facing The Back Corners	Facing The Back Wall



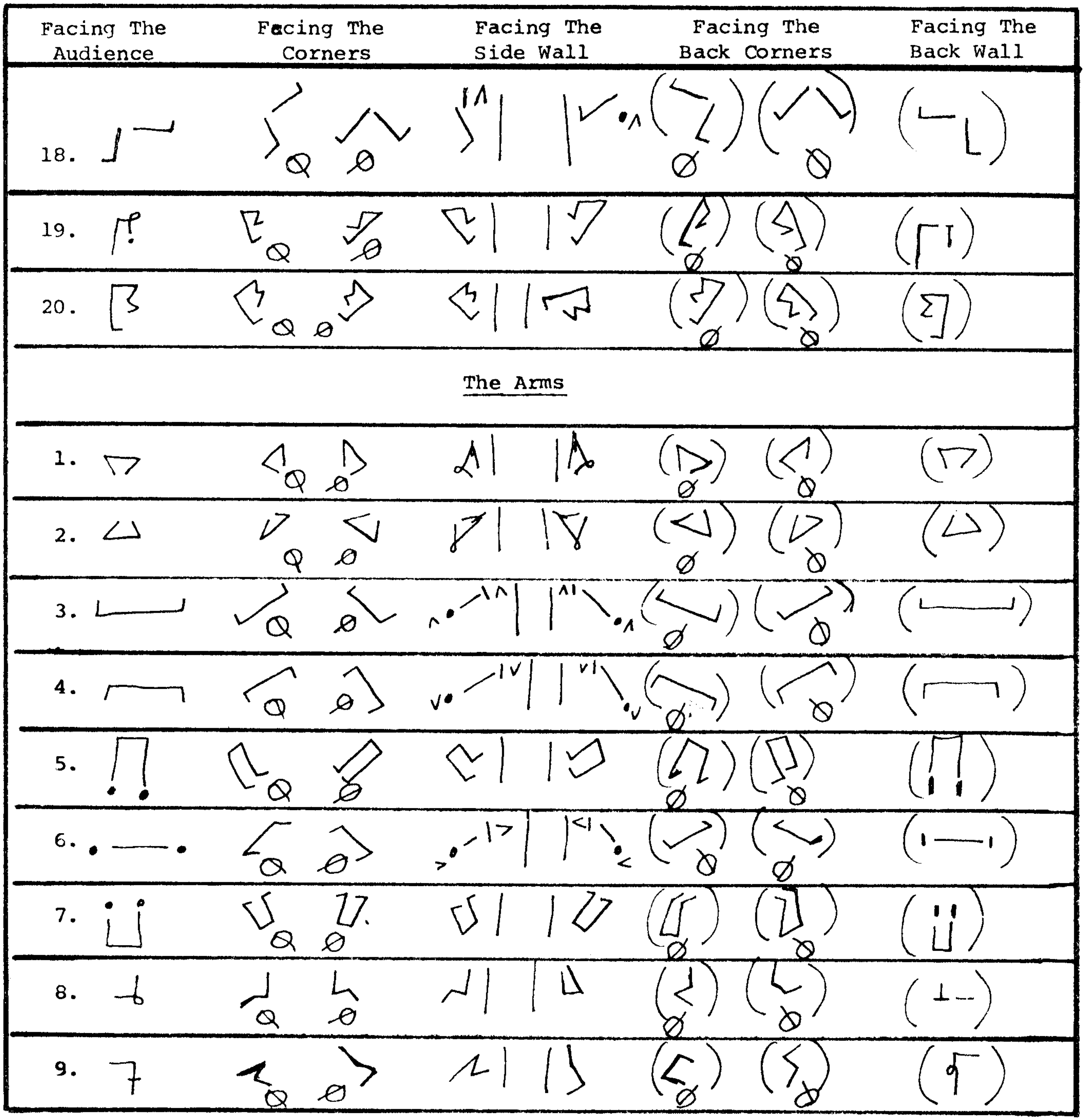
Turning The Figure



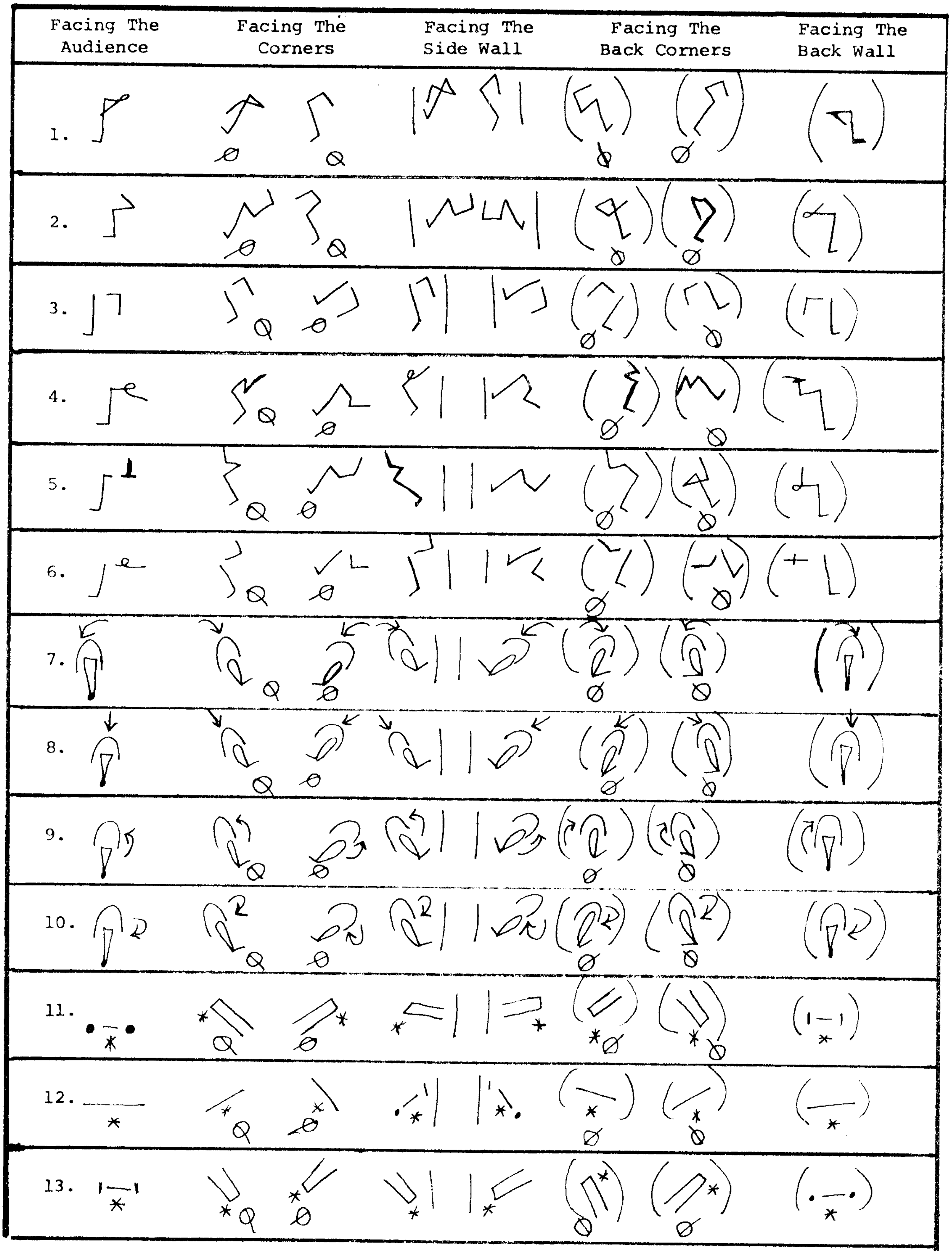
Turning The Figure



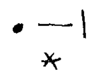
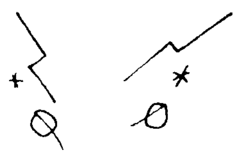
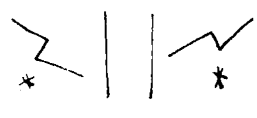
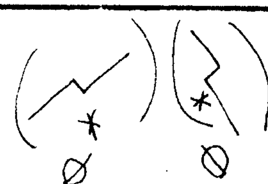
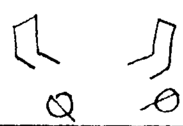
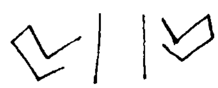
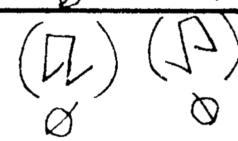
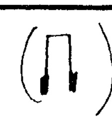
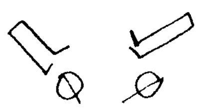
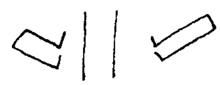
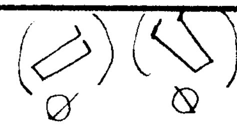
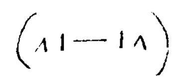
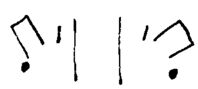
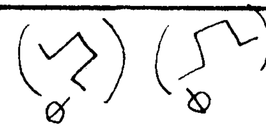
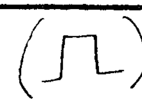
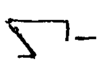
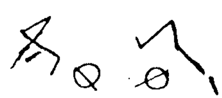
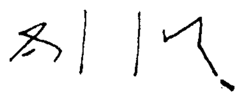
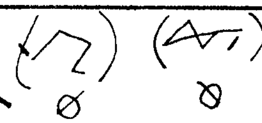
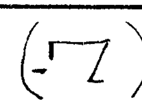
Turning The Figure



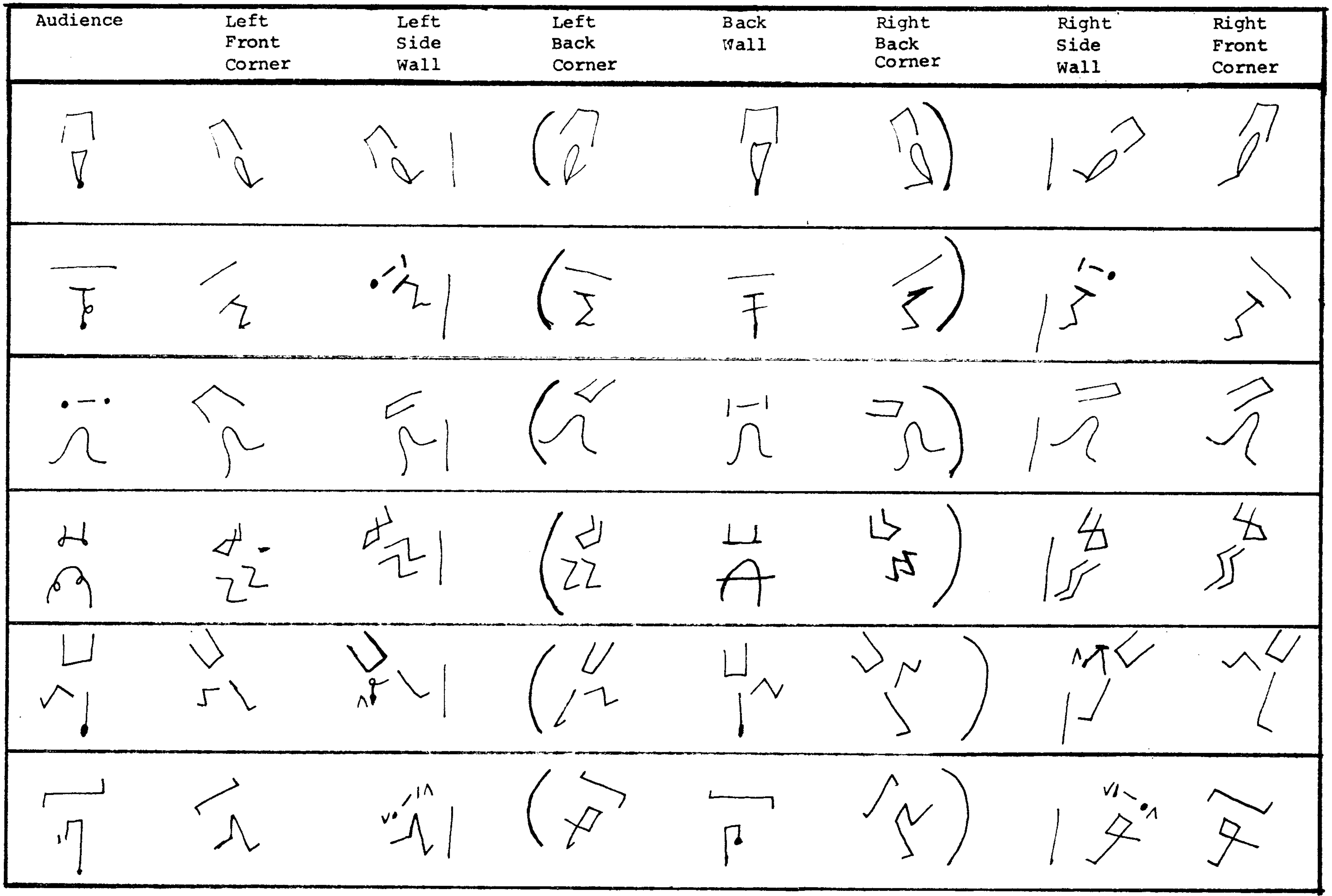
Turning The Figure

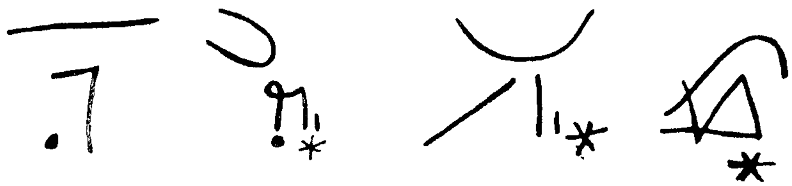


Turning The Figure

	Facing The Audience	Facing The Corners	Facing The Side Wall	Facing The Back Corners	Facing The Back Wall
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					

Turning The Figure





DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON SEVEN

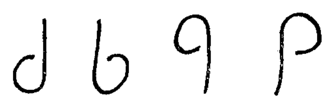
Basic Symbols For Movement

BASIC SYMBOLS FOR MOVEMENT

Movement Symbols are used in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand whenever movement is a vital part of the dance step. Sometimes they are used alone, and sometimes with figures. There is rarely time to place a figure before and after the Movement Symbol. Usually one figure and one Movement Symbol is enough.

Practice writing each symbol in rows to gain speed. Then begin writing complete dance steps, with figures and Movement Symbols.

1. Fast-Spinning Turns: (Same as in detailed DANCE WRITING”, but without the arrow: 1,2)



2. Slow-Inching Turns: (Circular Arrow: 1, &2)



3. Hip/Shoulder Circular Movement:



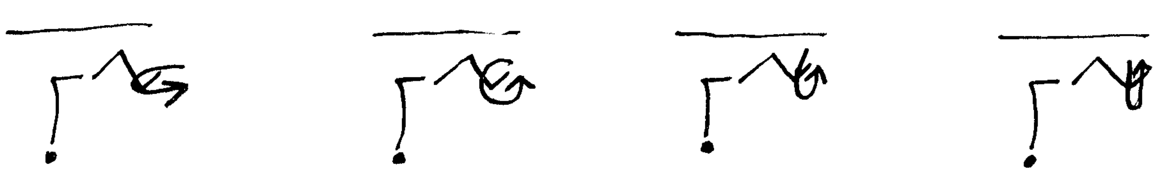
Transverse Plane | Frontal Plane | Diagonal Plane | Sagittal Plane

4. Knee/Elbow Circular Movement:



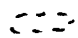
Transverse Plane | Frontal Plane | Diagonal Plane | Sagittal Plane

5. Ankle/Wrist Circular Movement:



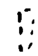
Transverse Plane | Frontal Plane | Diagonal Plane | Sagittal Plane

6. Toe/Finger Circular Movement:

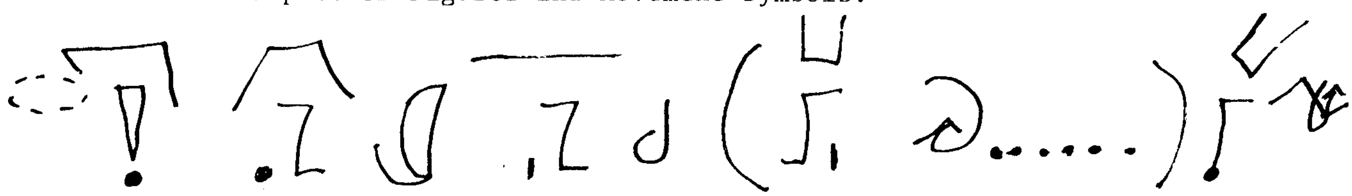

Transverse Plane


Frontal Plane


Diagonal Plane


Sagittal Plane

7. Here are examples of figures and Movement Symbols:

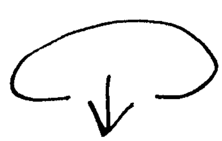


*Note: The Hip/Shoulder Circular Movement Symbol is written like this:
a. Draw the half circle of the symbol as you are watching the dancer's leg make the circle. b. Then quickly write the center line of the symbol.
c. Quickly add the arrow stem. Connect the drawing of the half circle with the half circle made with the leg or arm. It is the visual picture of what you see. The center line and arrow stem are written quickly when the movement is completed.

8. Shoulder Isolation Circles:  (one shoulder up, circle: 1 &2)

9. Hip Isolation Circles:  (arrow, circle: 1, &2)

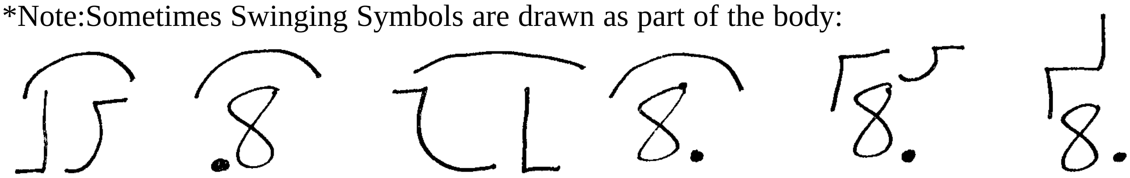
10. Head Isolation Circles:  (line, circle: 1, &2)

11. Ribcage Isolation Circles:  (arrow, circle: &1, &2)

12. Swinging Symbols: (Same as in detailed DANCE WRITING®: 1,2)



*Note:Sometimes Swinging Symbols are drawn as part of the body:



13. Falling Away From Center Dot: (Same as in detailed DANCE WRITING®: 1, 2)



14. Falling On Top Of Center Dot: (Same as in detailed DANCE WRITING®: &1)



15. Bourree, Or Quick Trembling Little Steps:



16. Walking Dots:



(Dark dots in a row)

17. Running Dots:



(Dot, dot, dot, dot, slash)

*Note: Walking and running dots in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand do not differentiate between steps with the right leg and steps with the left leg. Both right and left are written dark and very very quickly - like pricks of your pencil on the page. The running dot s slash a line through the pencil pricks.

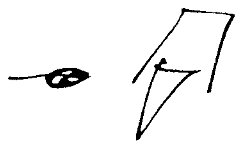
18. Rolling On The Ground:



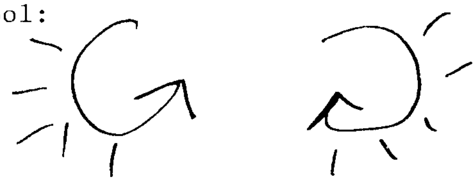
19. Basic Traveling Symbols: (Line, blob) (1,2)



20. Unit Tilts:

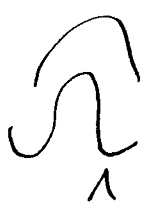


21. Traveling-Circle Symbol: (Dashes around circle represent Traveling Symbols without blob)

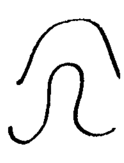


*Note: The Traveling-Circle Symbol is written as a circular arrow, and then the Traveling Symbols are put in hurriedly as dashes: 1, &2, &3, 4,5,6,7).

22. Weight shifts: (Little arrow under figure)

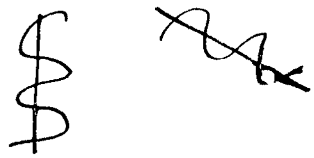


23. Jumping Arrow: (Simple line under figure)



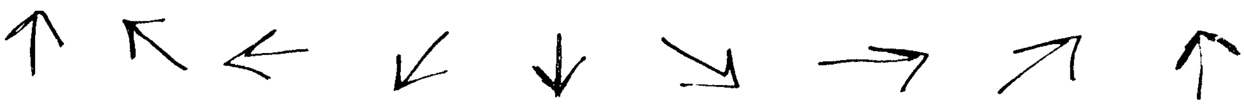
*Note: Draw the complete figure and then move the hand down and draw a slash. The slash represents the Jumping Arrow. Do not bother to point the feet of the figure. Draw the figure as if it were standing normally. Pointing feet is assumed.

24. Spinal Undulations:



(Wiggly line, slash)
(&1,2)

25. Small Movements Of The Arms Or Legs (Movement While Remaining On Center Dot):



Basic Directions



Curved Movement
Frontal Plane



Curved Movement
Diagonal Plane



Curved Movement
Sagittal Plane



Curved Movement
Transverse Plane



Curved Movement
Frontal Plane



Curved Movement
Diagonal Plane



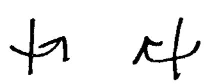
Curved Movement
Sagittal Plane



Curved Movement
Transverse Plane



Trembling Motion That
Doesn't Travel



Turn-In, Turn-Out
Rotation Symbol



Shaking Movement Symbol

*Note: Many of these arrows are used more in SIGN WRITING® than in DANCE WRITING®. If you are not familiar with all of them, you may want to refer to the textbooks: SIGN WRITING® For Everyday Use and SIGN WRITING® Shorthand For Sign Language Stenography. The Center For Sutton Movement Writing hopes to publish a textbook with all symbols from all movement fields in time. Contact the Center for further information or questions.



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

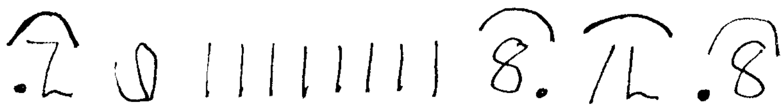
LESSON EIGHT

Repeats, Dynamics, Patterns & Contact

REPEATS, DYNAMICS, PATTERNS & CONTACT

Repeated Movement

The most commonly-used symbol for repeated movement in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand is a single vertical slash. The slash represents one repeat of the step. Many slashes in a row means many repeats. The step is written one time, and then a slash is written afterwards. This is very fast to write and to read:



(This example shows the step was repeated eight times.)

For opposite repeats, add an X to the slashes. For reverse repeats, add the two V's used in reverse repeat signs in detailed DANCE WRITING®:



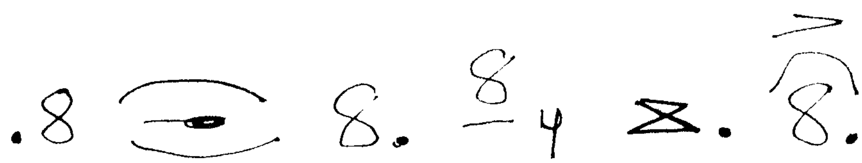
Opposite Repeat



Reverse Repeat

Dynamics

The Transitory Elimination Line and all other Dynamics Symbols are written the same in both the detailed DANCE WRITING® and DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. Here are some examples:



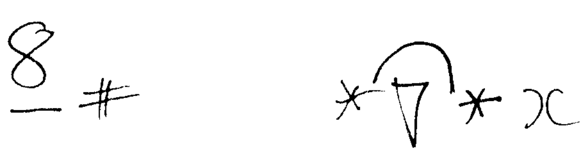
Patterns

Pattern stages are seldom notated in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand, but when they are they are written in a three-sided box. The pattern itself is written the same in both DANCE WRITING® and DANCE WRITING® Shorthand, except the triangle representing the dancer is left neutral without denoting male and female in the Shorthand. Patterns are usually written-in after the Shorthand is completed. The stenographer goes back over the notes and quickly writes in the patterns while the memory is still fresh. This can aid in transcription.



Contact

Contact symbols are written the same in both the detailed DANCE WRITING® and DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. Simply write them in whenever necessary.

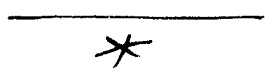


Contact On Floor

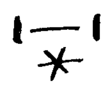
When the dancer sits or lies on the floor, contact symbols are placed underneath the figure. The contact symbols are mandatory, since without them the figure looks as though it is erect. When the floor is contacted, there must be a contact symbol under the figure:



On The Floor
Legs Front



On The Floor
Splits Side



On The Floor
Legs Back



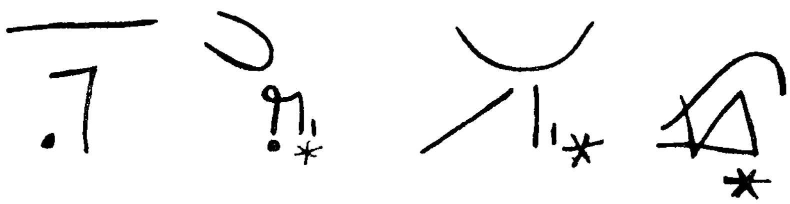
On The Floor
Splits Front &
Back



On The Floor
Kneeling



On The Floor
Upper & Lower
Body Contacting
The Ground



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

LESSON NINE

Standardized Shortcuts For Modern & Jazz Dance

STANDARDIZED SHORTCUTS FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

You have now learned all the basic symbols in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand for modern & jazz dance. Previous lessons have listed all of the symbols for the legs, arms, torso, movement, repeats, dynamics, patterns and contact.

Practicing writing these symbols at fast speeds will of course help the stenographer write modern or jazz dance quickly. However, no matter how well each symbol is learned, writing all the complexities and the details of modern or jazz at speed is difficult at best. To ensure good Shorthand notes, standardized shortcuts for well-known steps add speed and accuracy.

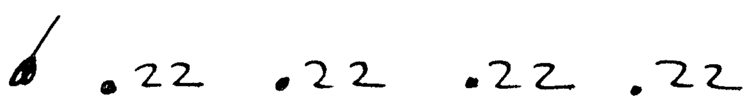
Shortcuts for writing classical ballet steps are already developed. Refer to pages 41-44 in the textbook: DANCE WRITING®' For Classical Ballet, published by The Center For Sutton Movement Writing.

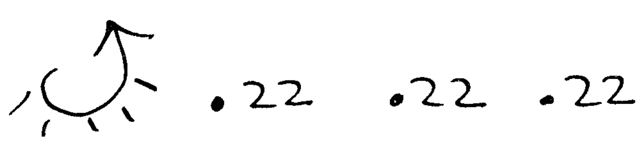
Shortcuts for writing modern dance or jazz dance steps still need to be developed. Why aren't they established already? Because modern dance and jazz dance is not as structured and rigid as classical ballet. Classical ballet has set terminology known by dancers world-wide. It is easy to develop one shortcut for each well-known step. But in modern and jazz dance, terminology is not universal and steps are not rigidly structured. Because modern dance and jazz dance styles vary so widely, and modern and jazz dance choreographers invent new movements constantly, standardized shortcuts are close to impossible.

A few well-known modern dance steps do have shortcuts at this time:

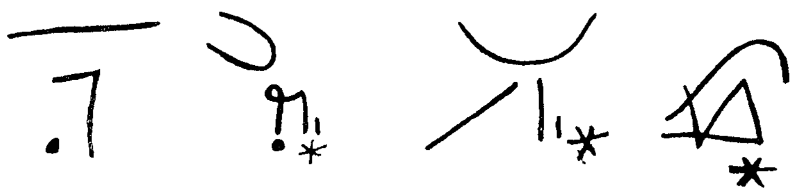
1. Simple running: 

2. Simple skipping: 

3. Triplets: 

4. Triplets In A Circle: 

If you have lists of modern dance or jazz dance terminology that is fairly universal that you could share with the Center For Sutton Movement Writing, please contact us at: P.O. Box 7344, Newport Beach, California, 92658-0344. With the terminolgy and viewing the steps once, standardized shortcuts can easily be established. We appreciate your correspondence.



DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND FOR MODERN & JAZZ DANCE

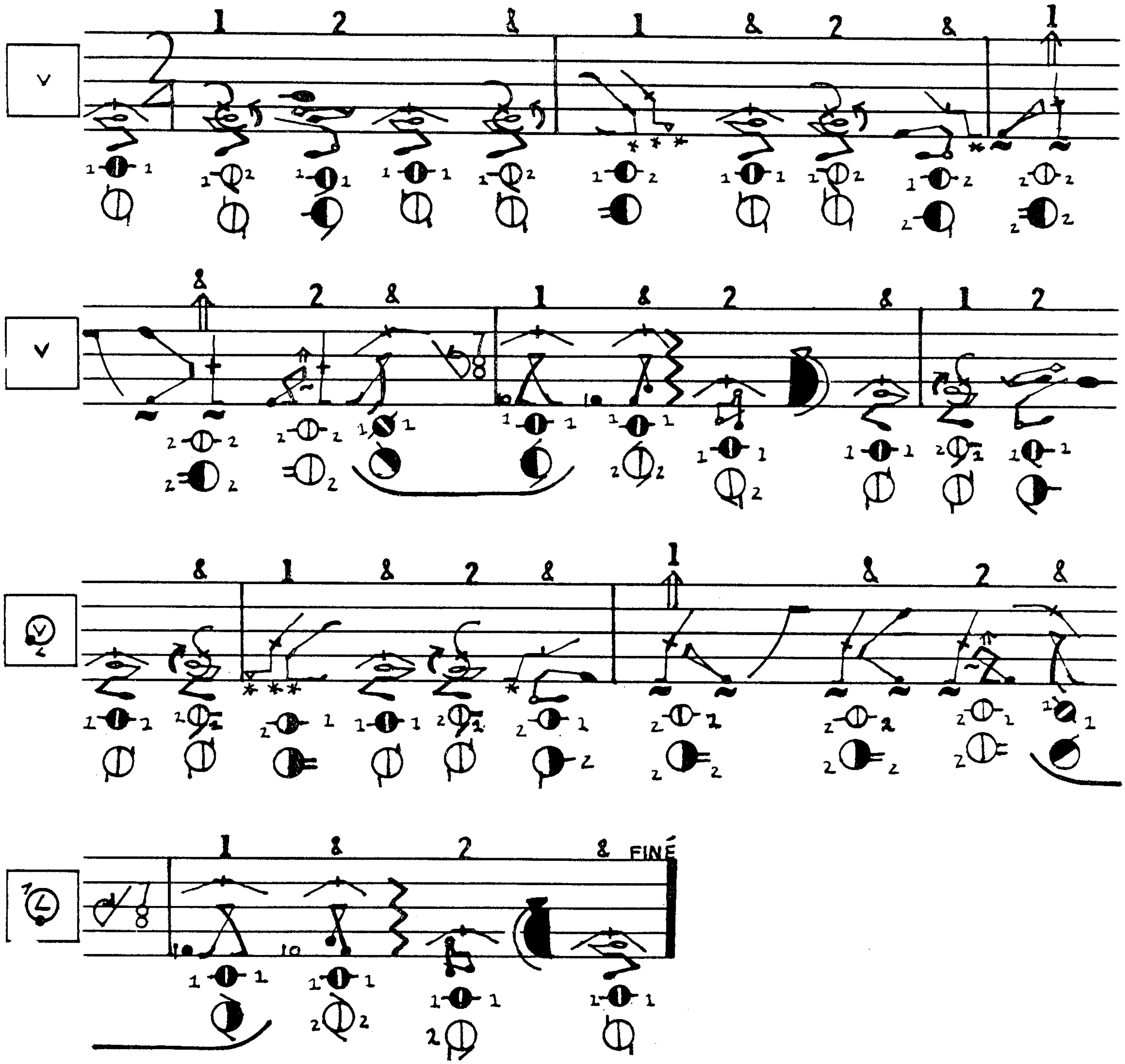
LESSON TEN

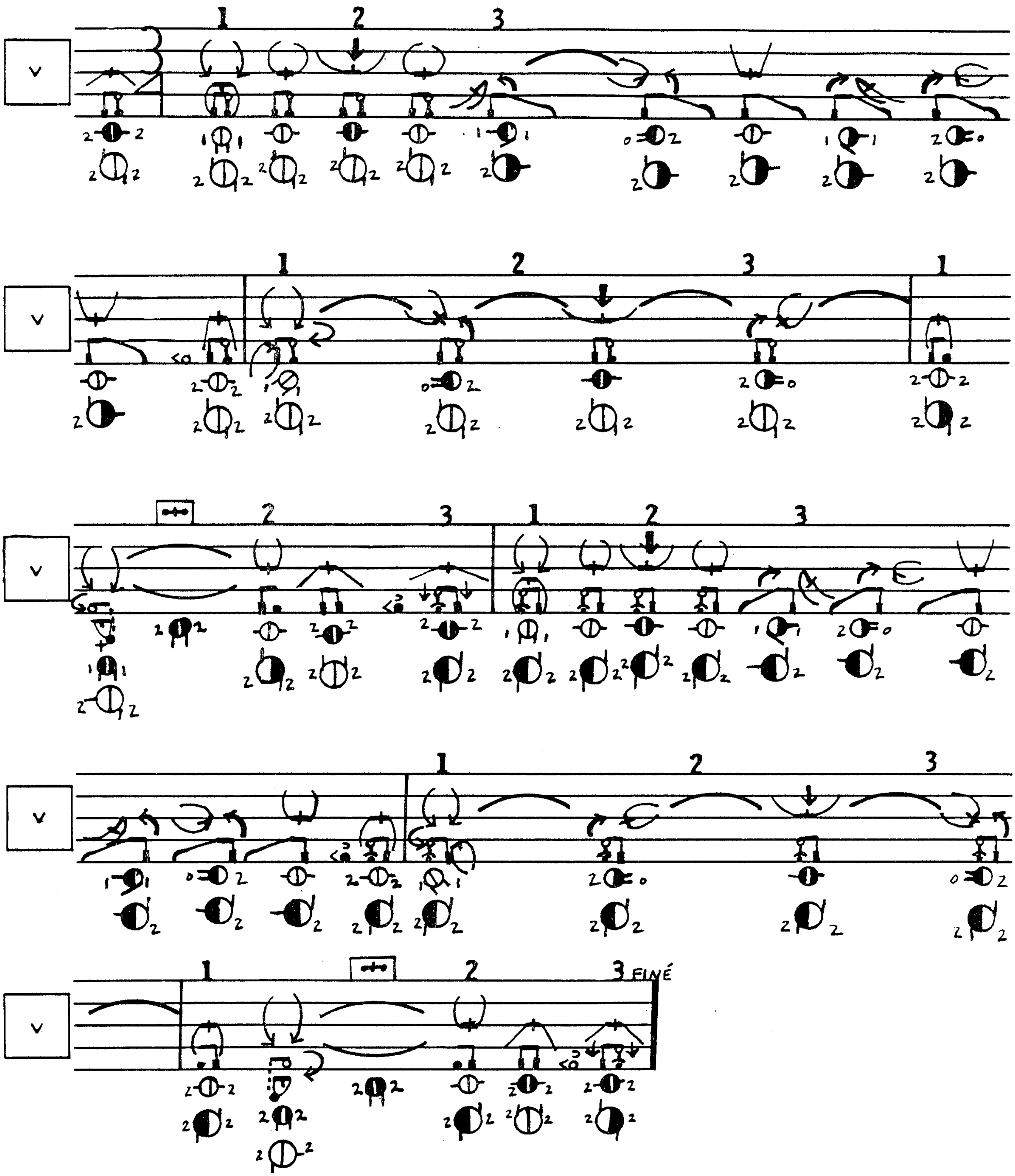
Transcribing Notes From DANCE WRITING® Shorthand To DANCE WRITING®

TRANSCRIBING NOTES FROM DANCE WRITING® SHORTHAND TO DANCE WRITING®

Exercise One: Writing DANCE WRITING® Shorthand Notes

Read the DANCE WRITING® on the page to the left and write the same movements in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand on the page to the right.




V
1 2 3
V
1 2 3 1
V
2 3 1 2 3
V
1 2 3
V
1 2 3 FINÉ

Exercise Two: Transcribing DANCE WRITING® Shorthand Into DANCE WRITING®

Read the following dance written in DANCE WRITING® Shorthand. Transcribe the dance into detailed DANCE WRITING®, including all 3-D Symbols (Position Symbols) and Pattern Stages.

